



Welcome to your first update...



I am delighted to again be given the role of Lead Member for Member Development. At Barking and Dagenham we have much to be proud of in the area of Member Development. This newsletter will introduce you to some of our councillor learning activities. We will update you twice a year.

Barking and Dagenham holds the Charter Plus level award for Elected Member Development. This recognises our commitment to councillor development and support, strategic approach to councillor development and the fact that our learning and development is effective in building capacity.



Recently, I have particularly enjoyed meeting individually with each of our newly-elected councillors together with the Leader, Cllr Darren Rodwell. Welcome! We want to effectively support you in your role and learning, so you can quickly contribute to the Borough to the best of your abilities. Working with our new and enthusiastic Member Development Group, I am confident that the development of councillors at Barking and Dagenham will go from strength to strength.

Cllr Sade Bright, Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Aspiration

Leading member development



Member Development Group Members: Cllrs Muhammad Saleem, Emily Rodwell, Ingrid Robinson, Princess Bright, Sade Bright (Lead Member), Laila Butt, Kashif Haroon, Donna Lumsden, with Fiona Taylor (Lead Officer), Fiona Jamieson (Member Development Officer). Other Members are Cllrs Jane Jones, Eileen Keller and Mohammed Khan

Meet the Member Development Group (MDG). We oversee the direction of Member development. Our next meeting will examine the effectiveness of the 2018 Member Induction and Training Programme and recommend any improvements. We want to identify new learning areas and hear the views of all Members about their training and development.

Future training ideas and needs

Next year's Member training programme is now being created. If you have topics you would like covered please contact [Councillor Sade Bright](#) or [Fiona Jamieson](#).

Mentoring New Members



Cllr Simon Perry's first mentoring meeting with Cllr Dominic Twomey, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

"Councillors come into politics to make a positive difference to our community. As a newly elected Member, what better way to learn, grow and gain invaluable knowledge than through a colleague such as Cllr. Twomey? I look forward to the coming months and the benefits the Mentoring Programme will bring in aiding me to better serve the residents of our borough."

Cllr Simon Perry, Chadwell Heath Ward

Further information about mentoring

Interested in becoming a peer mentor, or being mentored? Contact Fiona Jamieson, or read more LGA Councillor Mentoring Handbook.

Member Induction 2018



Members at the 8 May Induction Conference with their Corporate Parenting Pledge

The months following the May Council elections have been exceptionally busy with Member events to meet key partner organisations, senior officers and tour the borough, plus a great range of internal training. Topics included a new kind of Council, corporate parenting, safeguarding, quasi-judicial committees, standards, equality and diversity, scrutiny, public speaking and personal safety.

Feedback from Members about the Induction Programme: 'gave me more confidence, knowledge and skills', 'very informative', 'comprehensive', 'a lot of thought and planning had clearly been involved', 'very high standard'.

Borough tour



"We were treated to a fabulous sunny day and a ride in an iconic London double-decker bus for the Member Induction tour of the Borough in June.

"The tour showed the huge scale of regeneration underway in the borough. We ventured as far as the Thames Barrier and saw a range of sites from Barking Riverside to Beam Park, Leys Estate and Chadwell Heath. Highlights included visiting Barking Riverside's Experience Suite and the mosaic Soul Searching, depicting our history in River Road and Creekmouth.

"Following feedback from Members, another tour will be held next year because of the enormous number of changes happening in the Borough."

Cllr Emily Rodwell, Eastbury Ward

Scrutiny Perspectives



"I recently attended the CiPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and CfPS (Centre for Public Scrutiny) Councillor Conference and the National Health Scrutiny and Assurance Conference. It was a busy week! The Councillor Conference was held at the House of Commons. A great venue but on a beautiful day the view could be distracting! (see photo)

"There was an excellent range of speakers and we were left with some key questions: 'How do we know this is what the public want from us?', 'Does the Council take members' scrutiny contribution on finance seriously?' and 'What is our performance when compared to similar organisations?' Sir Bob Kerlake outlined the key roles of councillors and mentioned his work with [BeFirst](#) at Barking and Dagenham.

"The Health Conference which I attended with Cllr Paul Robinson, Deputy Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee, was a more practical workshop. Members from different Authorities shared best practice with presenters such as NHS England. This gave us the opportunity to exchange ideas, learn from each other and create solutions."

Cllr Jane Jones, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny guidance

Take a look at the free best practice suggestions and guidance available from the [Centre for Public Scrutiny](#).

[Keep up to date with local goings on | Sign up to the fortnightly residents' newsletter, One Borough](#)

Developing the Knowledge and Skills of the Audit Committee



Cllrs Dorothy Akwaboah and Muhammad Saleem, with trainer, Elizabeth Humphrey

"My colleague, Cllr Muhammad Saleem and I feel better equipped to carry out our roles on the Audit and Standards Committee following our attendance at this excellent course in September. Delivered by CiPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) at their central London office, the training outlined the wider responsibilities of an Audit committees.

"It was interesting to learn that an Audit committee is apolitical. We heard that audit is about holding people to account, and the importance of independent challenge in delivering an objective review. As a new councillor, it was reassuring to be told that specialist skills and knowledge are good, but aptitude, curiosity, and the ability to see patterns is more useful.

"The need to read all the committee papers was reinforced! There were presentations on how an audit committee could work with others to improve the management of the organisation's risk and the importance of effective working relations with internal audit. We also learned the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of an audit committee and the importance of regular review and evaluation."

Cllr Dorothy Akwaboah, Member of Audit and Standards Committee

More information

Read [Why Local Authorities Need Audit Committees](#).

Support on the Steep Learning Curve



Cllr Mohammed Khan

"As a newly-elected councillor, I have a huge responsibility to make a real difference to people in my ward and beyond. It is hard work and I need to balance the wishes of the local area, residents and voters, community groups, local businesses, the political party I belong to and the Council, on top of my personal commitments to family, friends and workplace. I engage with residents and groups on a wide range of concerns. I contribute to the development of policies and strategies and as a Member of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee, determine licensing applications. I need to quickly gain the necessary skills and knowledge to deal with a great range of issues. It is a steep learning curve.

"I was very pleased to find that my recent one to one personal development planning meeting with Fiona Jamieson was really helpful. Techniques were used to recognise my strengths and areas for development in my community

leadership and Council roles and to identify my short and medium term goals. As well as examining the Induction courses I have attended, we explored the great range of training offered by the Council including e-learning, mentoring, internal and off-site opportunities. We then created a custom-made personal development plan designed to suit my needs.

"I am happy to recommend the PDP process to other Members, and answer questions colleagues might have."

Cllr. Mohammed Khan, Chadwell Heath ward

Your Personal Development Plan (PDP)

All Members, returning and newly-elected are encouraged to develop a Personal Development Plan. This will be tailored to your situation, needs and aspirations. Contact [Fiona Jamieson](#) for more information.

Don't miss out | Every Friday our comms team sends a weekly Members' Briefing email update. Not receiving it? [Email the team](#)

Members' app



"The Members' App lets Barking and Dagenham Councillors easily access key, relevant data for our roles in the Council and community. Information on Casework and Surgeries, Register of Interests, Council Priorities and Member Benefits have been vital for me as a new Member during the Induction period.

"With Forward Plans, training dates, access to e-learning and recent additions such as the Borough Data Explorer, the Members' App helps keep me up to date. And if I miss anything, past course materials and Member Briefings are stored there too."

ClIr John Dulwich, Alibon Ward

More resources

Barking and Dagenham has membership of the following organisations, so it is free for councillors to access:

- Local Government Association (LGA): Councillors' Guide 2018/19 will provide you with the essential information you need to know as a councillor: <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/highlighting-political-/councillors-guide>
- Local Government Information Unit (LGIU): Top Tips, Daily News, Podcasts, Essential Guides <https://www.lgiu.org.uk/resources-for-new-councillors/>
- London Councils: Member Briefings, Events and Reports <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/members-area>

Your feedback, comments and ideas about this newsletter are welcome! If you have something you would like to share in the next edition, please send it by 31 March 2019. Contact Fiona Jamieson [by email](#) or phone: 020 8227 2877



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